PROPOSALS

For the Incouragement and Promoting of Religion and Learning in the Foreign Plantations; and to Induce such of the Clergy of this Kingdom, as are Persons of Sobriety and Abilities to accept of a Mission into those Parts.

Fo.
Bray
1699

WHEREAS *the Propagation of the Christian Faith, and the Increase of Divine Knowledge, amongst all sorts of Persons in His Majesty's Foreign Plantations, are the Wishes, Desires, and Prayers, of all Pious and Serious Christians, and such as are zealous of God's Glory, and the Salvation of Mens Souls.* AND WHEREAS *that Blessed Work, next under God, does principally depend upon the Abilities of the Clergy in those Parts, the Exemplarines of their Lives, and their Industry in Teaching others;*

WHEREAS ALSO *the Clergy, that are already in the Plantations, as well as those who are to be sent thither, cannot (Humanely speaking) be so capable of Informing themselves, and of Instructing others in the design of Christianity, in the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, in the Meaning and Importance of the Articles of our most Holy Faith, and in the Nature and Extent of all Christian Duties, without the Assistance of some good Commentators upon the Holy Scriptures; and one, at least, or more of those Authors, who have best treated upon each, and every of those Points.* WHEREAS ALSO *for the supply of that Want, Men of Parts and addicted to Study, will hardly be induced to leave the Expectations they may have of better Encouragement and Improvement in their Native Country, to go to remote Parts and Climates less agreeable, without such Advantages, as will over-balance all Considerations inclining 'em to stay at home; and, especially, not without a competent Provision of such Books, as are necessary for their Studies in those Places where they are to serve: (Few of them that go over from hence, being able to furnish themselves with so many Books as they shall need.)* AND, LASTLY, WHEREAS *Insufficiency and Scandal in the Clergy of those places, in all probability, would be most successfully prevented both in this and future Ages, should every Parochial Minister in the Plantations have a sufficient Library of well-chosen Books,*

of

of all those kinds before-mentioned, in which he might spend his time to his own Satisfaction, and with Improvement and Profit to himself and others.

TO PROMOTE THEREFORE *so Blessed and Noble an End, as the Propagation of Christian Knowledge in those Parts; and as well to encourage those who are there already employ'd in the Ministry; as also to invite over other able Ministers, and to furnish both, with proper Means for accomplishing so good a Work;* IT IS HUMBLY *offered to all that are hearty Well-wishers to the Souls of Men, and the Honour of their Saviour, to consider, and as they shall see Cause, to favour these Proposals following.*

1. THAT *a Draught having been made of what particular Books are judg'd most immediately and necessarily Useful, for a Parochial Minister, wherewith he may be sufficiently enabled both to inform himself, and to Instruct others, in all the Necessary and Essential parts of Christianity; so many of such Libraries be sent for that purpose, one to each Parish in the Foreign Plantations, particularly those of* Mary-Land, *and farther as the Fund to be raised shall enable.*

2. THAT *every Parochial Library ſhall be Affixed in a decent and large Room of the Parſonage-Houſe of ſuch Pariſh, there to remain to the ſole Uſe of the Miniſter thereof for the time being, unto all future Generations, and to be as* UNALIENABLE *as any other the Rights and Dues of the Church, which are Aſcertained by Law.*

3. THAT *in Order to the Preſervation of every ſuch Library to ſucceeding Ages without loſs (as far as can be Humanely provided in any thing of that kind) there be made an exact Catalogue of the Books belonging to the* Library *of each Pariſh; and that every ſuch Catalogue be fairly written in four Books of Vellum provided for that purpoſe: The firſt whereof to be left with the* Lord Biſhop *of* London *for the time being; a ſecond with his* Commiſſary, *or ſome chief Clergy-man in every of thoſe Plantations where ſuch* Libraries *are provided; and a third to remain in the reſpective* Libraries *themſelves: and a fourth to be depoſited in the* Veſtry *of each of the ſaid Pariſhes.*

4. THAT *the* COMMISSARY *be obliged, at leaſt once in three Years, Perſonally to make a* Parochial Viſitation; *And then, beſides the Charge of his Duty in other reſpects, that it be incumbent alſo upon him, particularly to Inſpect the* Parochial Libraries,

and

and to see that none of the Books be imbezell'd or lost: And that the Church-Wardens of each Parish be also obliged, every Year, before the Visitation, to inform themselves in what Condition the said Books are, and to Present accordingly at the Visitation.

5. THAT *for further Security to preserve them from Loss and Imbezelment, and that they may be known where-ever they are found; in every Book, on the one side of the Cover, shall be Letter'd these Words,* SUB AUSPICIIS WILLIELMI III. *on the other side the Name of the Parish to which these Books do belong:* EX GR. *E.* BIBLIOTHECA ANNOPOLITANA: *E.* BIBLIOTHECA BOSTONIANA.

6. THAT *the Minister of each Parish, his Heirs and Administrators, may be obliged, by Virtue of an Act of Assembly provided and made for that purpose, to make good what Books shall be imbezelled or lost by his Fault.*

MEANS

MEANS of obtaining such Parochial *Libraries.*

1. *THat Application be made to the Nobility, Clergy, and Gentry, for their Charitable Contributions to so Pious a Work; and especially that the Merchants and Traders to the Foreign Plantations be earnestly call'd upon, as Persons principally concern'd, to encourage this Design: It being most reasonable to expect, that in Gratitude to God, and the Inhabitants of those Plantations, the* more plentifully they have reaped of their Temporal Things, the more liberally they should sow to them in Spiritual Things.

2. *That Application be also made to such learned Authors as are now living, that they would bestow some of their own Books, which shall be judged useful to the Purposes aforesaid.*

3. *That, for the general Satisfaction of those who have advanced either in Books or Money to so pious a Design, a full Account shall be published what Books have been given, what Summs have been obtained, and how the same have been laid out to the designed Ends.*

Lastly, In Gratitude to the Benefactors towards this Pious Design, all those, whether they be Publick Societies, Companies, or Private Persons, who shall Contribute

bute any thing thereunto, ſhall have their Names and reſpective Summs; And the Authors ſhall have the Number of Books given by them, tranſmitted to Poſterity, by being Regiſtred in a Book kept for that purpoſe in each of the Libraries.

We look upon this Deſign, as what will very much tend to Propagate Chriſtian Knowledge in the *Indies*, being it will, in all likelihood, invite ſome of the more ſtudious and virtuous Perſons out of the Univerſities, to undertake the Miniſtry in thoſe Parts, and will be a means of rendring them uſeful when they are there: And therefore as we ourſelves have contributed chearfully towards Promoting of theſe Parochial Libraries, ſo we hope that many Pious Perſons will be found, who, out of Love to Religion and Learning, will alſo contribute thereunto.

Tho. Cantuar.
Jo. Ebor.

Hen. Lond.
Nat. Dunelm.
W. Cov. & Litchfield.
Tho. Carliſle.
Gilb. Sarum.
Humph. Bangor.
Edw. Worceſter.
Sy. Elienſis.
Gilb. Hereford.
Jo. Norwich.
Edw. Glouceſter.
Jo. Chiceſter.

Nar. Dublin.
Caſhall.
Oſſory.

BY the forgoing View, it may partly appear, what Proviſion is wanting in the *Plantations* to promote Chriſtianity, and by the Propoſals is ſignify'd one of the moſt effectual Methods to provide for it, by means of a ſtudious, Learned and ſober Clergy: And it is preſum'd, that many may more willingly become Aſſiſtants to the Deſign, when they ſhall underſtand what is already done towards the Promoting of it. And what farther Meaſures are now taken to accompliſh and perfect it.

As to the firſt then, by the Benefactions of pious Perſons of all Orders and Ranks, there are Two thouſand four hundred Pounds worth of Books ſent into the Plantations, whereby Thirty Libraries have been already Advanc'd, and ſome of them to a conſiderable Perfection, (one Decad of which will be ſpeedly Printed) And a Foundation is alſo laid by ſome few Books, of 70 Libraries more, which it is hop'd will alſo grow up, now that ſo many Preſidents are given, and ſuch worthy Gentlemen have been ſo kind to take their Share in ſoliciting that Affair when I ſhall be gone.

And these are the Measures by which alone I can hope to have a Design so full of trouble, and of such great Charge, to be ever Accomplish'd. As for my own part, I have labour'd in it full four Years my self. And if any thing worth so much Fatiegue and Expence has been done in it, I am to thank God I did not foresee the half of that Fatiegue and Expence which would attend it; for if I had, I much doubt whether I should have had the Courage ever to undertake it. But now that so many Persons both of Figure and Character are found, who will put to their Shoulders, I shall not doubt, under God, of that success which will compensate for the undue Reflections which I have suffer'd for not going sooner, (and that mostly from those who did least forward the Design for which I go at all) when my stay was solely, to that End, that after having left no Stone unturn'd to provide other ways and means, I might find out such Persons as are both able, and willing to carry on what is yet but begun.

And now these being the Gentlemen to whom I owe so much, it is not to be wonderd, that I should pay the greatest deference to their Commands; and therefore since they think it may be a great Encouragement to many, to

favour the Design, when they shall understand how gratefully and honourably it has been acknowledg'd, even by the **General Assemblies** of the Provinces abroad, to whose use these Libraries have been sent, I could not dispute a Compliance with their Desires, that I would Print the Letters of Thanks which I receiv'd from the Governour, Council, and Assembly of **Mary-Land**, as also from **Carolina**, upon that account; and they are as follows.

Port Annopolis *in* Mary-Land,
June the 11th. 1697.

Reverend Sir,

WE Return you our humble Thanks for the Libraries we understand you are taking Care to Collect for us, which we are sensible will be the best Inducement to Pious and Sober Ministers to come, and live amongst us: And will be the Cause of such Education to be given, both to our own People, and Native Indians, as will best promote the Interest of Religion, and Morality in this Province.

We hope our present Incapacity of making such Grateful Returns as we ought for so great Favours, will be no Hinderance, or Impediment, to your good Resolutions of coming to us. And, when God enables us, we shall not fail to express our Gratitude, to the best of our Ability. We have not any Thing at present to assure you of, other than the Commissary's Office; which, in Concurrence with his Excellency, our Governour, we have desir'd and pray'd may be Appropriated to you. But are not without Hopes, that in a small time some favourable Opportunity will offer it self, whereby we may farther testify our Value of your great Merit.

SIR,

Your oblig'd humble Servants,

Thomas Laurence, Secretary, in behalf of His Majesty's Council.

Kenelm Cheseldyn, Speaker, in Behalf of the House of Delegates

For the Reverend Dr. Bray, *at the Lord Almoner's Lodgings,* Whitehal.

Charles-

Charles-Town *in* South Carolina
November the 25th. 1698.

Reverend Sir.

WE *esteem our selves so much oblig'd to you for the kind and generous Present of so considerable a part of our Publick Library, that we thought we could not express our sense of your Favours so properly any other way, as by thus returning you our hearty, and united Thanks, as we are the* General Assembly *for this Province of* Carolina. *Sir, we hope it will be of General Good to us, as we are well assured it was your design it should; and we cannot but now think it our Duty, to make it our Endeavours to Encourage Religion and Learning amongst us, according to the best of our Ability, seeing that your self (though a Stranger) have been so kind and generous, as to set the first step towards the promotion of so Good and Necessary a Work.*

Reverend Sir,

Your most Humble and Oblig'd
Servants.

In behalf of the Council,
Joseph Blake, Governour.

In behalf of the Commons.
Jonathan Amory, Speaker.

To the Reverend Dr. Thomas Bray,
at my Lord Almoners *Lodgings,*
at White-hhall.
London.

DAN. XII. 3.

They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.

THIS, and the two preceding Verſes are a Prophecy of the future State of the Church, at the two great Advents of our Saviour to it. In the *firſt* Verſe is foretold, what dreadful Diſtreſſes and Difficulties it ſhould ſtruggle with. In the *ſecond* and *third*, are declar'd, what inexpreſſible Rewards will Crown the Labours of Chriſt's Faithful Servants, eſpecially of thoſe who have been Inſtrumental in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Mankind. *They that be wiſe*, or Teachers, or Inſtructers, as ſome render it, *ſhall ſhine as the*, &c. In my Enlargement upon which Words, I ſhall do theſe four things.

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First, *I will ſhew you what is meant by turning many to Righteouſneſs.*

Secondly, *Who they are that have, whoſe Duty yet it is, and who may ſtill be ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs.*

Thirdly, *That it will be found one Day the higheſt pitch of Wiſdom to have been Inſtrumental in this bleſſed Work.* Becauſe,

Fourthly, *and* Laſtly, *Such ſhall be the moſt glorioufly Rewarded.* It is *they that ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.*

And, *Firſt*, I will ſhew what is meant by *turning many to Righteouſneſs.* Now *Righteouſneſs*, in the ſtricteſt ſence of the Word, does denote only one Vertue amongſt the whole Train of Chriſtian Graces, namely, Juſtice and Equity betwixt Man and Man. But in its more comprehenſive Acceptation, (and ſo it is generally to be underſtood throughout the Scriptures) it does import no leſs than the whole of that Religion, which will render us aceepted by God, and in which, if we be found, when we come to die, God will paſs a favourable Sentence upon us at the Day of Judgment.

And ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as it is now fixt, and ſtated under the Goſpel, conſiſts in this, that in the firſt place we *Renounce the Devil and all his Works*, that is, abandon the Service of that Arch-Rebel the Devil, and deteſt and forſake all his Works of Sin. He having himſelf moſt ungratefully Revolted from God, has not only carry'd whole Legions of fallen Angels into a curſed Rebellion againſt their Creator, but has drawn off the far greateſt part of Mankind into the ſame wicked Apoſtacy with himſelf; inſomuch, that divide the whole Earth into thirty Parts, it is computed by skilful Geographers, that nineteen of it are Inhabited by Idolaters, that is, Men ignorant of the true God; and in effect worſhippers of Devils: Not to ſay what Idolatrous, and other deſtructive Hereſies he has brought into Chriſtendom it ſelf, and even in thoſe Churches of Chriſt where God is beſt known, the Chriſtian Faith the beſt underſtood, and Chriſtianity profeſs'd in its greateſt Purity. It is a ſorrowful Conſideration, how much the Works of the Devil, Magick, Sorcery, Lying, Perjury, Uncleanneſs, Murder, Rapine, and Violence, and indeed, all manner of Wickedneſs, are confidently and openly committed and avow'd. And now a moſt conſiderable part of

that Righteousness we are here upon consists in this, That we abandon the wicked Party of Satan's Adherents, either Foreign or Domestick; and that being listed in the Service of the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, we give up our selves to his Government and Obedience. And this is that so material a part of Righteousness, call'd *Repentance from dead Works*, Heb. vi. 1.

A second part of this Righteousness is Faith, that is, the Knowledge and Belief of God in his Nature and Attributes, and a firm practical Belief of Christ the *only Begotten Son of God*, as the great Mediator betwixt God and Man, who, to that End, having took upon him our Nature, was Invested with the threefold Office of a *Prophet*, to Instruct us in the way to be Reconciled to God; of a *Priest*, to satisfie his Justice for all our past Offences; and of a *King*, to Conduct and Govern us; and finally, to Reward us for all our Services. *This* also *is Life eternal*, or another part of that Righteousness for which we shall be Rewarded with Life Eternal, *Thus to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent*, John xvii. 3.

A third is, to *Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and to walk in the same all the Days of our Life*, that is, having abandon'd the Service

of

of Satan, and yielded our ſelves up to the Faith of Chriſt, the Completion of our Righteouſneſs will be this, to live the remaining part of our Lives to the Honour of God, by paying him a faithful Obedience to all his moſt Juſt and Righteous Commands. And *Bleſſed are they who do his Commandments, for they only ſhall have right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. xxii. 14. Thus, in ſhort, you ſee the ſtate of that Righteouſneſs, upon the account of which we ſhall be juſtify'd and ſav'd.

And now it will be eaſie to underſtand, what it is to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*. And in the higheſt and moſt exalted ſence of the Phraſe, it is to Reduce whole Provinces under the Obedience of God. It is to reſcue that unhappy part of Mankind, which have for ſo many Ages paſt, labour'd under the Tyranny of Satan; it is to reduce them to the juſt and happy Government of their rightful Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt. It is to Inſtruct thoſe Dark Corners of the Earth, in which the Light of the Goſpel has not yet ſhone, or but very dimly: It is to enlighten them with a full and bright Knowledge of their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And it is laſtly, to render them obſequious Servants to a juſt and holy God, *whoſe Service is perfect freedom*.

It

It is, I ſay, to diveſt them of that Inhumanity, Savageneſs, and Brutality, whereby they are Beaſts of Prey to each other, and to ſtamp upon their Souls that lovely Image of God, conſiſting in Knowledge, Faith, Love, and Purity, whereby they will become Angels, nay, God's, one to another. This is to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, in the higheſt Sence of the Phraſe: But in a Lower, yet a very Noble Sence, it is to be any ways Inſtrumental in the Inſtruction and Converſion of any Conſiderable number of Souls in any part of the World, as well within the Chriſtian Pale as elſewhere: Within the Chriſtian Pale, I ſay, where, God knows, there is ſtill that Ignorance, Profaneneſs, and Immorality, which loudly *call for more Labourers into the Vineyard*, to carry on to Perfection the Information and Converſion of Chriſtians. And in both theſe Senſes

Secondly, *Who they are who have heretofore, whoſe Duty yet it is, and who may ſtill be ſaid to Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, is the ſecond thing I propos'd to ſhew you. And here we are to conſider, that as the Apoſtacy of Mankind from God began ſoon after the Creation, ſo God had his Miniſters from the very beginning conteſting with

with the Powers of Darkneſs, and with all poſſible Application reſcuing Mankind out of the *Snares of the Devil*, as *Abel*, *Seth*, *Enos*, and *Noah* before the Flood; which laſt, for his eminent and painful, tho' unſucceſsful Services in this great Work, was call'd the *Preacher of Righteouſneſs*, 2 Pet. ii. 5.

Nor did either the Occaſion for the like Preachers of Righteouſneſs ceaſe, even after the dreadful Deſtruction by an univerſal Deluge; nor was God afterwards wanting to his own Honour, or the Good of Mankind, in ſending his Prophets and Prieſts to be Preachers of Righteouſneſs to a wicked World.

It was but very few Centuries after the Flood, that the whole Earth was again Revolted from God, and overſpread with Wickedneſs; and it was not without a conſtant Succeſſion of Prieſts and Prophets, as well as of Mercies and Deſtructions, that the Divine Providence did ſecure one only Nation, the *Jews*, in their Allegiance to him. And yet even theſe his *peculiar People*, *This Holy Nation*, in proceſs of Time, had ſo corrupted themſelves, that *their very Righteouſneſs was as filthy Rags*, Iſai. lxiv. 6. And both their Principles and Morals were ſo far debas'd, and the moſt demure and preciſe amongſt them, the

Scribes

Scribes and Phariſees ſo defective in both, that our Saviour told his Diſciples, *Except their Righteouſneſs ſhould exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, they ſhould in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. v. 20.

And now when the Defection of Mankind from God was become ſo Univerſal, that it was time for him, either utterly to root out from the face of the Earth, all the Inhabitants of it, or he had no other way but by ſome Miracle of Mercy to Reform it; Then did the Divine Goodneſs, which always enclines him to the moſt Merciful part, chooſe to ſend an Ambaſſador Extraordinary to propoſe Terms of Reconciliation, and to invite Mankind home to God. And accordingly, *God, who at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, did in theſe laſt Days*, (or in the laſt great Age of the World) *ſpeak unto us by his Son, whom he appointed Heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the World*, Heb. i. 1, 2.

And here, how without Wonder and Aſtoniſhment, can we behold, with what prodigious Zeal, Application, and Induſtry the Bleſſed Jeſus ſet upon the great Work of Reforming Mankind. It was *his Meat and Drink*

to

to do the Will of him that ſent him, and accordingly *he continually went about doing Good*, both to the Bodies and Souls of Men. To their Bodies, by Healing them of all thoſe manifold and mighty Diſtempers that had then invaded them: To their Souls, by Curing them of thoſe moſt fatal Maladies of all, their Sins; to rid them of which, was ſo much the main and principal Deſign of his coming into the World, that from hence he was denominated a Saviour to it; *And they ſhall call his Name Jeſus, for he ſhall heal his People from their Sins.* But the Original cauſe of all their Miſeries, both Bodily and Spiritual, proceeding from the miſchievous Enmity of Satan, he did with the utmoſt diligence purſue that Rebel, driving him out of the Bodies and Souls of Men; both which he had ſo univerſally Uſurp'd, and did at that time ſo cruelly Tyrannize over.

And that he might at length be utterly diſpoſſeſs'd of all his Dominion, and that no Corner of the Earth might be left him to exerciſe his Tyranny upon, when the Bleſſed Jeſus was leaving the World himſelf, in purſuance of that *Power which was given unto him in Heaven, and on Earth*, he Commiſſion'd his Apoſtles to proſecute the glorious Conqueſt over the Devil,

and all his Works, which he had begun, *commanding them to go, and disciple all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them, promising to be with them always, even unto the end of the World*, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. And so faithful were they in the Execution of their Trust, that they soon dispers'd themselves into the utmost parts of the Universe, so that not an Age had past, till *their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World*, Rom. x. 18. And thus you see who they are that have heretofore *Turn'd many to Righteousness.*

But who those are, *whose Duty yet it is, and who may still be said to do the same*, remains to be consider'd, and may God enable us to find them out.

And, *First*, This is a Work incumbent upon every Christian Church and Nation; but ought to be the Concern and Care of none more than ours, and can never be more seasonably set upon than at such a juncture as this. I say, to consider, and assist in the best Methods of *Turning many to Righteousness*, ought to be the Care and Concern of every Christian Church and Nation;

and

and this out of a grateful Return for that Bleſſed Light of the Goſpel which has ſhone amongſt them, by which Chriſtians are, or may be, (if they ſuffer themſelves to be regulated by the Rules of Chriſtianity, which ſo directly tend to render both private Perſons and publick Societies happy) by which Chriſtians may be, I ſay, ſo much diſtinguiſh'd from the deplorable State of thoſe Barbarous and Savage Nations, where Ignorance of the True God and Religion overſpreads their Country. Nothing more naturally diffuſes its ſelf than Light, and how prodigiouſly ungrateful would it be for a People themſelves enlighten'd, not to ſpread that to all Mankind which was given them to ſhew others, as well as themſelves, the Way to God, and their Happineſs!

But eſpecially this is a Care and Concern incumbent upon ſuch a Church and Nation as ours. A Church ſo pure in its Doctrine, and ſo Heavenly in its Worſhip, as in that reſpect is the fitteſt in the World to be the Model to the New Acquiſitions which ſhall be gain'd to the Church of Chriſt. But, alas, that it ſhould be ever ſaid, that another Church, whoſe Religion is ſo ſadly corrupted by *Paganiſh* Superſtitions, ſhould yet be ten thouſand times more

Zealous, in Baniſhing Infidelity and Paganiſm out of the World than ours is!

And it is a Work in Gratitude due from ſuch a Nation as this: A Nation ſo enrich'd by the Commerce and Commodities of ſo many Barbarous and Pagan Countries. Surely, *ſince we have in ſo plentiful a manner been made partakers of their Carnal Things, it is our Duty alſo to Miniſter to them in Spiritual things.*

And ſuch a Work ſurely can never be more *Seaſonably* promoted by any Church or Nation, than at ſuch a juncture as this. What has made up ſo great a part of our Devotions, for ſome Years paſt, as our Thankſgivings for the little leſs than Miraculous Deliverances we have receiv'd, in the Preſervation of our Religion and Liberties?

And when had this our Preſervation ſo glorious a Completion, as at this time? and ſo ſolemn an Acknowledgment paid to Heaven for it, as lately in this Place? But what fulſome Hypocriſie would it be to thank God with ſuch ſeeming Devotion, for the Preſervation of a Religion we do not in the leaſt Value? or, How can we be thought to Value it at all, if when it is in our Power to extend the Chriſtian Pale ſo far as we may, and to the bringing into it ſo many Thouſand Souls,

over

over whom we have an abſolute Dominion, ſhould we yet take no Care about it?

Secondly, Thoſe whoſe Duty it is in a more peculiar Manner than others, to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, are the Miniſters of Religion; I ſay, in a more *peculiar Manner* than others; for we are not only ordained and ſeparated for this Work, but the Inſtructing, Inlightning, and Informing of the World, which is the Foundation of all Righteouſneſs, is peculiarly the Paſtors Province. I do call the Inſtilling of Divine Knowledge into the Minds of Men, the *Foundation of all Religion*: For why? Knowledge of the true Nature of God, and of all the parts of that Religion which is to be paid him, is a neceſſary Guide and Director to all Virtuous and Religious Practice, it being the ſame thing to the Soul, as the Eye is to the Body. Nor is Divine Knowledge neceſſary to Mens living Vertuouſly, only as it is a Guide and Director to us ſo to live, but it is requiſite alſo, as it is the Principle and Reaſon whereon all virtuous and worthy Deeds are to be founded; inſomuch, that a thing which is otherwiſe well done, if it be not done *knowingly*, but ignorantly, will not be imputed by God, nor Man, as a vertuous and laudable Action. Nay, the chiefeſt of all Divine Graces, if it be not acted

out

out of a through Knowledge of the Nature of God, and of true Religion, will e'en become, for want thereof, the Blackeſt of all Sins: as *Zeal*, when not guided by Knowledge, will eaſily be tranſported to Cruelty and Murther. What ſhall I ſay? The want of throughly underſtanding the true Nature of God, and the Nature and Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion, is the only Cauſe of all that Superſtition which is in the World; of Superſtition I ſay, than which there is not a more grievous Malady that can poſſibly infect the Souls of Men, ſo as to render them more troubleſome to themſelves, more miſchievous to the publick Good and Welfare of the Church, and to act more diſhonourably and provoking to God. In ſhort, it is Ignorance which is the Natural Parent of that Atheiſm and Infidelity ſo rife amongſt Men; and indeed, not only of that, but of all other Vices and Wickedneſſes whatſoever.

And now it is the great Duty of the Miniſters of Religion, to remove from the Minds of Men that Ignorance of Divine things, which is the cauſe of all their Miſcarriages, and to inſtill into them thoſe Doctrines and Religious Principles which are the Fountain of all their farther Righteouſneſs. This we are to attend upon,

by

by *Catechizing*, and *Preaching*, and *Conference*, and whatever Methods can be thought moſt ſucceſsful and effectual in the Inſtruction of Mankind; and thoſe who ſhall beſt inſtruct their People, ſhall moſt effectually *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*: And therefore,

Thirdly, Thoſe Perſons will be reputed to have no ſmall ſhare in this Bleſſed Work, who have put the Miniſters of God in a Capacity of ſo Inſtructing his People, by making a Proviſion for the Acquiſition, Maintenance, and Propagation of Chriſtian Knowledge. Such are thoſe who have been the Founders of Churches, Schools, Colleges, and Libraries. And not here to ſpeak of the Excellency of ſuch Charities, which directly tending to the Everlaſting Happineſs of the Souls of Men, muſt be as far beyond what terminate only on this Mortal Life, as the Soul is more Excellent than the Body; and as an Eternal is to be preferred to a Temporal Felicity: But not to inſiſt on this: The Advantage of being thus Inſtrumental in Turning many to Righteouſneſs lies here, That it is not only in the preſent Generation, that ſuch are thus ſerviceable to the Souls of Men, but in all Ages to come, and when they ſhall be long dead, they will yet ſpeak, and ſo ſpeak as to have

a Share in all the Converſions, which ſhall be made by Vertue, and through the Aſſiſtance of that Stock which they have laid up for the Promoting of Religion and Learning.

And eſpecially, the Erecting of Libraries of neceſſary and uſeful Books in Divinity, is of all others a neceſſary Proviſion for the Propagation of Chriſtian Knowledge. For why? *The Prieſts Lips ſhould preſerve Knowledge*, becauſe *the People are to ſeek the Law at his Mouth*, Mal. ii. 7. And the Meaſures of Knowledge a Miniſter is to be Maſter of, muſt be neceſſarily ſuch as ſhall enable him to give his People an entire View of the whole Scheme of Chriſtian Doctrine in that Connexion, wherein one part of it depends upon another, and for want of which, the Generality of Chriſtians are ſo ignorant of the true Nature and Deſign of Chriſtianity. Farther, a Paſtor muſt throughly underſtand the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, and the Nature of Chriſt's Mediation, through which it was obtain'd. More particulary yet, he muſt be able clearly to explain, and fully to prove each Article of his Chriſtian Faith; many of which not being obvious to our Natural Reaſon, but capable of Proof only from the Scriptures, he muſt be well vers'd in the Language, and

and Manner of Speaking of the Holy Pen-Men, before they can be ſo explain'd and prov'd. And he muſt be able to ſtate exactly the Nature and Extent of Chriſtian Duties, which Knowledge depending upon a right Underſtanding of the Nature, and different Obligations of all thoſe many ſorts of Laws, Natural, Divine, and Humane, which regulate and direct our Duties. This is a part of Knowledge as extenſive as it is neceſſary.

All which Premiſes being duly conſider'd, and withall, that we cannot now work Miracles, and that *Inſpiration* is no part of our Talent; but that we are left to the Ordinary means of Converting the World; *namely*, the Common Meaſures of God's Holy Spirit accompanying our hard Study: It muſt therefore clearly follow, that thoſe Perſons will be reputed to have no ſmall ſhare in this Bleſſed Work, who ſhall lay ſuch a Foundation of Chriſtian Knowledge, as without which, Humanely ſpeaking, it is not poſſible the Paſtors of Chriſt's Church ſhould feed their Flock with neceſſary Inſtruction.

Thirdly, And now I am to ſhew you, *That it will be found one day the higheſt pitch of Wiſdom to have been Inſtrumental in this Bleſſed Work of*

Turning many to Righteouſneſs. It is the part of Wiſdom to propoſe to it ſelf a Good End, and then to purſue it by due and proper Means. And proportionably, as the End is more or leſs excellent, and the Means more or leſs adapted to carry it on; in the ſame degree is a Man's Wiſdom to be judg'd greater or leſs with relation to it. Now here the End is incomparably excellent, beyond any other that can be nam'd. For why? to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs* is, in effect, to conſult, and that in the higheſt Manner, the Honour and Glory of God, and the greateſt Good and Happineſs of Mankind, than which nothing can be thought of more Excellent. *To Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, you have alſo ſeen, is to diſpoſſeſs Satan of an unrighteous Uſurpation he has made upon God's Dominion over his own Creatures, and it is to reduce them under the Government of their Rightful Lord and Maſter. And can any thing be more glorious than ſuch an Atchievement? And it is ſo to rectifie the corrupt and ſinful Nature of Men, and to bring them under the Direction of ſuch Laws, as alone can make them happy: And what is it to be a Benefactor, if this be not?

Nor can any Means be more worthy and great, and better fitted to the Purpoſes propos'd, than

than thoſe we have conſider'd. For let the whole Nation, let the Clergy, and ſuch as have Wealth and Subſtance, ſet heartily about it, and the Work is done.

This, in ſhort, is to be *wiſe to Salvation*, and alas! what is the Wiſdom of this World in compariſon with this? What an Ideot is *David's* Fool, who when he might *make to himſelf Friends in Heaven of the Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs, heaps up to himſelf Riches, not knowing who ſhall gather them?* And who is wholly ſolicitous to find out ſome one, *from whom he might call his Lands after his own Name*, (fondly thinking, that by this means *his Houſes ſhall continue for ever, and his Dwelling-Places to all Generations*). When by ſuch Charities to the Souls of Men, as have been mentioned, he might provide that his Name be *written in the Book of Life*. Which brings me to the laſt thing propos'd; and ſhews, that to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs* is the higheſt Wiſdom, becauſe that,

Fourthly, *Such will be the moſt Gloriouſly rewarded.* Beſides, the Propoſing of a Good End, and the Proſecuting of it by due and proper Means, there is ſomething yet farther wanting to compleat the Wiſdom of our Actions, and

Turning many to Righteouſneſs. It is the part of Wiſdom to propoſe to it ſelf a Good End, and then to purſue it by due and proper Means. And proportionably, as the End is more or leſs excellent, and the Means more or leſs adapted to carry it on; in the ſame degree is a Man's Wiſdom to be judg'd greater or leſs with relation to it. Now here the End is incomparably excellent, beyond any other that can be nam'd. For why? to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs* is, in effect, to conſult, and that in the higheſt Manner, the Honour and Glory of God, and the greateſt Good and Happineſs of Mankind, than which nothing can be thought of more Excellent. *To Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, you have alſo ſeen, is to diſpoſſeſs Satan of an unrighteous Uſurpation he has made upon God's Dominion over his own Creatures, and it is to reduce them under the Government of their Rightful Lord and Maſter. And can any thing be more glorious than ſuch an Atchievement? And it is ſo to rectifie the corrupt and ſinful Nature of Men, and to bring them under the Direction of ſuch Laws, as alone can make them happy: And what is it to be a Benefactor, if this be not?

Nor can any Means be more worthy and great, and better fitted to the Purpoſes propos'd, than

than those we have consider'd. For let the whole Nation, let the Clergy, and such as have Wealth and Substance, set heartily about it, and the Work is done.

This, in short, is to be *wise to Salvation*, and alas! what is the Wisdom of this World in comparison with this? What an Ideot is *David*'s Fool, who when he might *make to himself Friends in Heaven of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, heaps up to himself Riches, not knowing who shall gather them?* And who is wholly solicitous to find out some one, *from whom he might call his Lands after his own Name*, (fondly thinking, that by this means *his Houses shall continue for ever, and his Dwelling-Places to all Generations*). When by such Charities to the Souls of Men, as have been mentioned, he might provide that his Name be *written in the Book of Life*. Which brings me to the last thing propos'd; and shews, that to *Turn many to Righteousness* is the highest Wisdom, because that,

Fourthly, *Such will be the most Gloriously rewarded.* Besides, the Proposing of a Good End, and the Prosecuting of it by due and proper Means, there is something yet farther wanting to compleat the Wisdom of our Actions, and

that is, to do all in the Proſpect of an excellent Reward. And here, as the End, *viz.* the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind, is the moſt tranſcendently Glorious, and the Means propos'd in order to accompliſh it, are what do moſt become Chriſtians in their ſeveral Stations, and according to their ſeveral Abilities; ſo the Reward that will Crown all this, is here in my Text ſpoke to be ſuch, as is not in the power of Words to expreſs a greater. *They that are wiſe ſhall ſhine as the Brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs as the Stars for ever and ever.*

And indeed, as of all other Sinners, thoſe will be the moſt exquiſitely puniſh'd, who ſhall any ways corrupt and deprave the Principles and Manners of Mankind: So of all the Righteous Servants of God, thoſe will be exalted to the higheſt degrees of Glory, who ſhall be moſt induſtrious in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Men. *I ſay of all other Sinners, thoſe will be the moſt exquiſitely puniſh'd, who ſhall any ways corrupt and deprave the Principles and Manners of Mankind.* Such as do ſow ill Principles, and do any ways diſcourage and diſcountenance Piety and Vertue, are ſaid to *put a Stumbling-block, and to be an Occaſion to fall in their Brother's way*, Rom. xiv. 13. And *wo to that Man* (ſaith our Saviour) *by whom*

the Offence cometh: For whoſo ſhall offend one of the meaneſt of thoſe that believe in him, it were better for him that a Milſtone were hanged about his Neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea, Matt. xviii. 6, 7. And a moſt emphatical Threatning this is to all thoſe wicked Inſtruments of *Unrighteouſneſs* abroad in the World, who make it their Buſineſs, and ſeem to be intent upon this very thing. It is ſad enough to have one ſelf done or acted wickedly: But whoſoever ſhall not only *break*, tho' it be *one of the leaſt Commandments; but ſhall teach Men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. v. 19. that is, none at all: He ſhall be caſt out of it, and puniſh'd as one of thoſe who are the greateſt Enemies to it. There is in the Words a vaſt deal more to be underſtood than is expreſs'd, as is uſual, both in the Sacred Writings, and in profane Authors; ſo that the Caſe of thoſe Men is moſt dreadfully and deſperately bad, who by profane, atheiſtical, and lewd Diſcourſe, or whatever other *evil Communications do corrupt good* Principles and *Manners*. But above all others, it is a dreadful thing to conſider what will be the Doom of thoſe Men, who by wicked Books, ſuch as both *Atheiſts*, *Deiſts*, *Socinians*, and *Antinomians* do now, to the Re-

proach

proach of our Church and Nation, daily publiſh amongſt us. It is dreadful, I ſay, to conſider what will befall ſuch in the End. What Evil of this Nature is done only by Diſcourſe, is but tranſciently bad, and may ruine the Souls only of ſome few of their unfortunate Companions. But the wicked Principles which are propagated by Books are laſting Miſchiefs, from whence, as from a *Pandora*'s Box, fly out thoſe Plagues and Mortal Diſeaſes that can never be recall'd, and will ſpread Deſtruction and Ruine amongſt the Souls of Men to the World's End.

And indeed it is hard to ſay, what Meaſures of Repentance may be ſufficient for theſe Men. The Repentance they muſt come to, or be everlaſtingly and immeaſurably Undone, muſt be ſuch as comes not under the ordinary Definitions given that great Condition of our Salvation. It is not a private Grief and Sorrow, nor barely an Amendment for the future, will be ſufficient to reconcile ſuch to God. But as the Diſhonours done to the Great Creator, by their means, are never likely to end, but with the World; ſo the Reparations to be made for theſe kind of Affronts and Injuries to Chriſt's Kingdom muſt be by a Recantation as publick and laſting as the Nature

ture of the Offence is. And the exacting of ſuch a Repentance as this, I muſt needs recommend to you, *my Brethren*, who are entring to day into the *Miniſtry*, when-ever you are called to the Sick Bed of any notorious Atheiſt or Deiſt whatſoever. And this was the Reſolution of a very eminent Biſhop of our Church, in the Caſe of one of a conſiderable figure amongſt them, after he had written his Book *de Veritate*. You are the Stewards of the Myſteries of God, ſo that you cannot, with Fidelity to your Great Maſter, diſpence the Sacrament of Reconciliation to thoſe, who have erected laſting Batteries againſt his Kingdom, till they themſelves, by a like publick Recantation, ſhall have pull'd them down with their own hands. So that you ſee the very Repentance of thoſe, who ſhall *Turn many to Unrighteouſneſs*, is a hard and fearful Diſcipline. And what then? How much beyond the common Meaſures will the Puniſhment of thoſe amongſt them be, who ſhall remain Impenitent? And indeed it is but reaſonable to believe, that the Caſe will be vaſtly different betwixt thoſe who have only in their own Perſons tranſgreſt the Laws of God, and ſuch who make a Party, and fight the Devil's Battels againſt Him. Theſe Men muſt be ſuppoſed to be firſt

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at perfect Enmity with Him, and their whole Nature muſt be envenom'd againſt Him; and therefore it cannot be expected but that the *Fury of his Wrath*, and the very *Dregs of his Anger* will be poured out againſt ſuch.

And now, if of all other Sinners thoſe will be the moſt exquiſitely puniſh'd, who ſhall any ways corrupt and deprave the Principles and Manners of Mankind; then, by parity of Reaſon, *of all the Righteous Servants of God, thoſe will be exalted to the higheſt degrees of Glory, who ſhall be moſt induſtrious in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Men; or ſhall lay the Foundation of Chriſtian Knowledge, or Contribute toward the Promoting of it.* For this we need no other Teſtimony than that remarkable place of St. *James* v. 20. *Know, that he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Ways, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and ſhall cover a Multitude of Sins.* Theſe Words ſpeak ſuch a Regard to the Charitable Endeavours of thoſe who do any ways promote, or do Labour in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Sinners, that through the Merits and Satisfaction of Chriſt, (by which only it is that God becomes propitious to our beſt Performances) this kind of Charity will be had in no mean Conſideration when God ſhall take Cognizance of our Sins

and

and Failures. And if the Converting of one Sinner ſhall be ſo conſider'd, what Glories will await thoſe who *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*? I cannot poſſibly expreſs them in any higher Words than thoſe of my Text, in which alone there is a force and luſtre, like to the Rewards themſelves which they beſpeak.

And proportionably as the Aſſiſtances given to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs* ſhall be moſt extenſive and laſting; in the ſame meaſure we muſt ſuppoſe the degrees of Glory will be alotted to ſuch Piety. And therefore, ſince, next to what the Apoſtles did by their perſonal Labours, and inſpir'd Writings, to Convert Mankind to God, ſcarcely any thing can be thought of a more direct and immediate Tendency to the ſame Glorious and Bleſſed End, than to lay up thoſe Magazines of Chriſtian Knowledge on the Confines of Satan's Kingdom, out of which the Miniſters of God's Word may be conſtantly ſupply'd, both with the Food of Souls, and with that Spiritual Armour where-with they may carry on the War with Succeſs, ſo as at length to drive that Arch-Rebel out of thoſe vaſt Territories he now poſſeſſes: It will therefore follow, that thoſe pious Perſons will moſt effectually conſult their future Happineſs,

and provide beſt for an Exalted Glory, who ſhall expend moſt in fixing Libraries of neceſſary and uſeful Books in Divinity, in order to the Inſtruction both of Miniſter and People. Such indeed cannot be ſaid, by ſo doing, to hazard their Perſons in the Converting of Mankind, and ſo may not be entitled thereby to the Reward of *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors*. But however, they may be much more inſtrumental in *Turning many to Righteouſneſs*, even than thoſe who actually labour in the Work it ſelf; becauſe that, in effect, it will be they who ſhall *Preach*, *Catechize*, and *Inſtruct* thoſe Parts of the World, as well in future, as in the preſent Age. It is they will be the Fountain, we ſhall be only the Conduit-Pipes through which the Waters of Life will be convey'd to the People: And therefore, except we ſhall beſtir our ſelves very much, they will far out-ſtrip us in the Perſuit of Eternal Glory.

In ſhort, Thoſe who ſhall make ſuch a laſting Proviſion for the Inſtruction and Converſion of any conſiderable part of Mankind, may, in ſo doing, be very well look'd upon as a ſort of *Apoſtles* to thoſe Parts of the World. And if ſo, we may conclude a great

great deal concerning the Degrees of Glory wherewith ſuch ſhall be recompenc'd, from that Promiſe of our Saviour to his Apoſtles, *Matt.* xix. 28. *Verily, I ſay unto you, When the Son of Man ſhall ſit on the Throne of his Glory, ye alſo ſhall ſit upon Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Iſrael:* For tho' we are not to conclude from theſe Words, that any beſides the Twelve ſhall be exalted to the higheſt Degrees of Happineſs, yet from hence we may clearly gather, that proportionably as Perſons ſhall approach neareſt to the Apoſtles in Evangelizing Mankind, they ſhall be placed nearer and nearer to them upon the ſeveral Aſcents, to the higheſt Stations in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Not that I would leſſen the Hopes of Glory to you, *my Brethren*, who ſhall labour in this Great and Glorious Work, of *Gaining Souls to God.* No, but rather give me leave, with the great Apoſtle to the Gentiles, *Rom.* xi. 13. *to magnifie to you your Office*, who are entring to day upon the Sacred Miniſtry, and ſome of you in order to a Bleſſed Miſſion. And you have this Advantage of all other Profeſſions of Men, that whereas others, by a due diſcharge of the Duties of their proper Calling, can only

become Righteous themſelves, you, in the due Exerciſe of your Miniſtry, will *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*: So that whilſt other Chriſtians can expect only the common Rewards for well-doing, you may promiſe your ſelves, upon the Performance even of the ordinary Duties of your Function, to be extraordinarily recompenc'd. And the Reaſon is this, becauſe the Good that you will do is doubly and trebly beneficial; for you will not only conſult thereby your own Happineſs, but will render your ſelves Benefactors to Mankind, and what is above all, will enlarge the Bounds of Chriſt's Kingdom.

I ſay you will render your ſelves Benefactors to Mankind. For why? the Religion you are to propagate and promote, is of ſuch a Nature and Tendency, that were it heartily embrac'd, the moſt Wild and Savage of Men would become Innocent, Kind, and Sociable to one another; they would not hurt nor deſtroy in all the Holy Mountain. And it is Prophecy'd, that this will be the Fruits of Chriſtianity, when *the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord*, Iſai. xi. 9. And you will alſo, by a diligent Application to the Duties of your proper Calling, pull down the

Kingdom

Kingdom of Satan, and enlarge the Bounds of Christ's Kingdom, or at leaſt-wiſe encreaſe the Number of his faithful Subjects.

This will indeed engage you in great Conflicts with the Powers of Darkneſs; and the Difficulties and Oppoſitions they and their Agents, the wicked Men of the World, ſhall give you, will call forth all your Courage and Prudence to reſiſt. But the greater are the Dangers and Difficulties, the more noble is the Vertue; and the greater the Vertue, the more glorious will be the Reward.

And therefore I cannot forbear to bleſs that Providence which calls both you and me into the Service of thoſe darker parts of the Church, where we ſhall have occaſion to do more Good than here we could be able, to conteſt with greater Difficulties, and thereby to entitle our ſelves to the chiefeſt Rewards. For as bad as it is to be Ambitious after Earthly Honours, it is nobly Vertuous, and Chriſtian-like, an Emulation to excell in the Favour of God, and in thoſe Stations of Glory which he will beſtow upon ſuch as ſhall exert themſelves in his Service. And to be Inſtrumental *in bringing Light to them that ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death*, whether we conſider the Service, or the Recom-

Recompence, has enough in it to ſatisfie the moſt pious Ambition.

To conclude therefore in the Words of St. *Paul*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. *Fight the good Fight of Faith*, that is, maintain and propagate the Gospel againſt all Oppoſition, and live according to it; *lay hold on Eternal Life*, nay, ſtrive to excell in thoſe Achievements that ſhall entitle you to the chiefeſt Glories of it; for this is that *whereunto you are called*, and are now to *profeſs this good Profeſſion* at an Holy Ordination *before many Witneſſes*.

FINIS.

11 (bound out of its place) [**]

	Colonies.	Pariſhes & Churches	Miniſters	Libraries
VII.	*Mary-Land*	30 Pariſhes, but meanly Endow'd, the Country being but lately divided into Pariſhes, and the Churches but lately built, to the great Charge of the preſent Governour Colonel *Nicholſon*, and the Country.	16 Miniſters.	16 Libraries.
VIII.	*Virginia.*	50 Pariſhes, with 100 Churches & Chapels. There is alſo a Noble College now Erected, and Endow'd by His preſent Majeſty and the late Queen; and carry'd on from the firſt Foundation with the great Charge, Application, and Management of Colonel *Nicholſon*, and the other Truſtees and Governours thereof.	30 Miniſters.	
IX.	*North Carolina*	1 Church lately built at *Charles-Town.*	1 Miniſter going over	1 Library.
X.	*South*			
XI.	*Bermudas.*	8 Tribes or Pariſhes, wherein are 9 Churches, and near 1000 Families.	3 Miniſters	3 Libraries
XII.	*Bahama* Iſlands, *viz.*			
	1. *Providence.*	Has 80 Families with 1 Church lately built.	1 Miniſter.	
	2. *Eleutheria.*	Has about 20 Families.		

	Colonies.	Pariſhes & Churches	Miniſters	Libraries
	3. *Andros.*	Has ſeveral Families.		
XIII.	*Jamaica.*	15 Pariſh-Churches.	8 Miniſters	2 Libraries begun.
XIV.	*Anguilla.*	A poor Iſland, having ſeveral *Engliſh* upon it, but not able of themſelves to build a Church, nor maintain a Miniſter.		
XV.	*St. Chriſtophers.*	6 Pariſh-Churches.	1 Miniſter.	1 Library begun.
XVI.	*Antego.*	5 Churches.	3 Miniſters	1 Library begun.
XVII.	*Mevis.*	3 Pariſh-Churches.	3 Miniſters	1 Library begun.
XVIII	*Monſerrat.*	3 Pariſh-Churches.	3 Miniſters	
XIX.	*Barbados.*	14 Pariſh-Churches.	14 Miniſters.	
XX.	*St. Vincents.*			

1. By what goes before it may appear, That ſeveral of our Colonies do want Churches and Pariſhes, and that one half at leaſt of the Pariſhes want Miniſters.

2. By Experience, as well as the Reaſon of the Thing, I'm convinc'd, That 100 *l.* laid out in a LIBRARY, is what will beſt induce a Learned and Sober Miniſter to go into the Service

vice of any part of the Church in the Plantations; And that the ſame is a neceſſary Encouragement, conſidering that few Men of Fortunes, who are able to purchaſe Books for themſelves, will go into ſuch remote Parts.

3. By what goes before it may alſo appear, That meerly the ſettling of LIBRARIES in the ſeveral Pariſhes of each Province will require a very conſiderable Fund, Fifty Pounds worth of Books being the leaſt that can be ſuppos'd requiſite to enable a Miniſter to diſcharge the Duties of his Function. Beſides that, in the Chief Town in each Province it would be requiſite to have a Library of more Univerſal Learning, for the Service and Encouragement of thoſe who ſhall launch out farther in the purſuit of Uſeful Knowledge, as well Natural as Divine.

4. Beſides LIBRARIES of Neceſſary Books in Divinity, for the Uſe of the Clergy, it will be requiſite, in order to propagate Chriſtian Faith and Manners, to furniſh the reſpective Miniſters with ſome Numbers of Bibles, Catechiſms, Common-Prayers, and other Practical and Devotional Pieces, to diſtribute *gratis*, eſpecially in poorer Families.

5. It will be farther requiſite to have free Schools erected, at leaſtwiſe one in every County, for the Education of their Children: And it would, in a more eſpecial manner, become the Profeſſors of ſo Excellent a Religion as ours, to have a Proviſion made in one or two Schools at leaſtwiſe, in every Province, for the Inſtruction of half a dozen *Indian* Youth, to be ſent afterwards amongſt their own People, to civilize and convert them.

Thus, in ſhort, I have endeavoured to give a *General View* of the State of the *Plantations*, with reſpect to *Religion*, and to hint at what is wanting to promote it: And from this very ſlender View how eaſie is it to ſee, and with what Indignation can we behold, how many *Engliſh* Colonies there are, the Trade of one whereof is ſometimes computed to be worth 500000*l. per Annum* to this Nation, in which there is no *Church*, nor *Preacher*, nor *Publick Worſhip*, nor *Sacraments* adminiſtred. The *Mahometan* does not ſo little regard his *falſe Prophet*. He no ſooner gains any new Province, but he erects his *Moſchs*, and places the *Creſcent* upon the top of them, to intimate that his Religion ſhall increaſe, or it is not his fault. And the *Papiſts*, we do well know, ſpare no Coſt in ſending their *Miſſions* into all

all the parts of the known World. And it is very worthy our Notice, that the *Dutch East-India* Company do Yearly expend, and that with great Succeſs, 15000*l. per Annum* in the *East-Indies* alone, for the Maintaining and Propagating the Chriſtian Faith. And now, that ſo little ſhould be yet done, ſo much as to preſerve in Being that *Pure* and *Undefil'd Religion* which we profeſs, even in thoſe Colonies of *Engliſh* Men, from whence the whole Kingdom has been ſo much Enrich'd, as well the *Gentleman*, by the Advance of his *Rents*, as the *Merchant*, by the Increaſe of his *Stores*, and the *Mechanick*, by the Vending of his *Manufactures*, is truly an amaſing, as well as a melancholy Conſideration to ſuch as have any true Love to God, or the Souls of Men.

But, alas! how few are there amongſt us who do in the leaſt reflect upon, or at all value the ineſtimable Advantages which, above the reſt of the World, they enjoy by being Chriſtians. It is now an indifferent thing with many what Religion Mankind is of; ſo that, according to thoſe Men, the Son of God did in vain deſcend from Heaven; and that grand Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, and that Myſtery of our Redemption, the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of which the Bleſſed Angels do with Admiration adore, was to little purpoſe, and might have been as well ſpar'd, for that the Heathens are

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in as good a Condition as we. Nay, *Chriſt Crucify'd* is now become, as well as formerly, to ſome, a *Stumbling-Block*; to many, *Fooliſhneſs*, even the Subject of their Ridicule and Raillery. And theſe cannot but be look'd upon as Ominous preſages of ſome heavy Judgments upon us; for as an ingenious Perſon doth ſingularly well obſerve, *Whenever a Country loſes that Reverence that is due to Religion, and the Laws, we may ſafely pronounce that its Ruine is not very diſtant.*

Diſc. of the Trade of *Eng.* Part II. p. 265.

And as Contempt of Religion and the Laws is a ſure mark of a declining Nation; ſo new Colonies and Societies of Men muſt ſoon fall to pieces, and dwindle to nothing, unleſs their Governours and Magiſtrates interpoſe, to ſeaſon betimes the Minds of ſuch a new People with a ſence of Religion, and with good and vertuous Principles.

Theſe are Sentiments, I know, quite different from the Politicks of ſome Men, But thoſe who heartily believe God and his Providence, are firmly perſwaded, that the Happineſs and Well-being of any People does advance, or decline, in proportion to the Supports that are given, and the Regards that are paid to *True Religion.*

And I muſt with Gratitude acknowledge, that ſome ſuch I have met with in the Proſecution of this Deſign, which I have engaged in for the *Plantations,*

tations, or elſe the Expence, as well as the Fateigue, had been wholly inſupportable. But as what has been hitherto done, does but let me into the View of ſo much more, which is ſtill wanting to Propagate and Maintain Chriſtianity in thoſe Parts, ſo after that my Expectations of a more Publick Proviſion for this great Work have fail'd me, I muſt again renew my Applications to ſuch Pious Perſons who have a juſt Value of the Worth of their own, and others Souls. And if the following Diſcourſe upon the Nature and Excellency of this kind of Charity above all others, ſhall contribute any thing to promote the Deſign, I ſhall obtain an End, to accompliſh which I could be content to ſacrifice my Life, with the Remainder of my ſmall Fortunes; and thoſe worthy Perſons will doubtleſs find it upon their Accompt, when to be found a good Steward, to the Honour and Glory of God, of the Talents which He has given, will afford them thoſe ſuperlative Degrees of Joy, which are beyond the Imagination of us here below to conceive, and which therefore the following *Diſcourſe* does not pretend ſo much as to ſhadow.

DAN. XII. 3.

They that be wiſe ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteouſneſs, as the Stars for ever and ever.

THIS, and the two preceding Verſes are a Prophecy of the future State of the Church, at the two great Advents of our Saviour to it. In the *firſt* Verſe is foretold, what dreadful Diſtreſſes and Difficulties it ſhould ſtruggle with. In the *ſecond* and *third*, are declar'd, what inexpreſſible Rewards will Crown the Labours of Chriſt's Faithful Servants, eſpecially of thoſe who have been Inſtrumental in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Mankind. *They that be wiſe*, or Teachers, or Inſtructers, as ſome render it, *ſhall ſhine as the*, &c. In my Enlargement upon which Words, I ſhall do theſe four things.

First, *I will ſhew you what is meant by turning many to Righteouſneſs.*

Secondly, *Who they are that have, whoſe Duty yet it is, and who may ſtill be ſaid to turn many to Righteouſneſs.*

Thirdly, *That it will be found one Day the higheſt pitch of Wiſdom to have been Inſtrumental in this bleſſed Work.* Becauſe,

Fourthly, *and* Laſtly, *Such ſhall be the moſt glorioufly Rewarded.* It is *they that ſhall ſhine as the brightneſs of the Firmament, and as the Stars for ever and ever.*

And, *Firſt*, I will ſhew what is meant by *turning many to Righteouſneſs.* Now *Righteouſneſs*, in the ſtricteſt ſence of the Word, does denote only one Vertue amongſt the whole Train of Chriſtian Graces, namely, Juſtice and Equity betwixt Man and Man. But in its more comprehenſive Acceptation, (and ſo it is generally to be underſtood throughout the Scriptures) it does import no leſs than the whole of that Religion, which will render us accepted by God, and in which, if we be found, when we come to die, God will paſs a favourable Sentence upon us at the Day of Judgment.

And ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as it is now fixt, and ſtated under the Goſpel, conſiſts in this, that in the firſt place we *Renounce the Devil and all his Works*, that is, abandon the Service of that Arch-Rebel the Devil, and deteſt and forſake all his Works of Sin. He having himſelf moſt ungratefully Revolted from God, has not only carry'd whole Legions of fallen Angels into a curſed Rebellion againſt their Creator, but has drawn off the far greateſt part of Mankind into the ſame wicked Apoſtacy with himſelf; inſomuch, that divide the whole Earth into thirty Parts, it is computed by skilful Geographers, that nineteen of it are Inhabited by Idolaters, that is, Men ignorant of the true God; and in effect worſhippers of Devils: Not to ſay what Idolatrous, and other deſtructive Hereſies he has brought into Chriſtendom it ſelf, and even in thoſe Churches of Chriſt where God is beſt known, the Chriſtian Faith the beſt underſtood, and Chriſtianity profeſs'd in its greateſt Purity. It is a ſorrowful Conſideration, how much the Works of the Devil, Magick, Sorcery, Lying, Perjury, Uncleanneſs, Murder, Rapine, and Violence, and indeed, all manner of Wickedneſs, are confidently and openly committed and avow'd. And now a moſt conſiderable part of

that Righteouſneſs we are here upon conſiſts in this, That we abandon the wicked Party of Satan's Adherents, either Foreign or Domeſtick; and that being liſted in the Service of the true God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, we give up our ſelves to his Government and Obedience. And this is that ſo material a part of Righteouſneſs, call'd *Repentance from dead Works*, Heb. vi. 1.

A ſecond part of this Righteouſneſs is Faith, that is, the Knowledge and Belief of God in his Nature and Attributes, and a firm practical Belief of Chriſt the *only Begotten Son of God*, as the great Mediator betwixt God and Man, who, to that End, having took upon him our Nature, was Inveſted with the threefold Office of a *Prophet*, to Inſtruct us in the way to be Reconciled to God; of a *Prieſt*, to ſatisfie his Juſtice for all our paſt Offences; and of a *King*, to Conduct and Govern us; and finally, to Reward us for all our Services. *This* alſo *is Life eternal*, or another part of that Righteouſneſs for which we ſhall be Rewarded with Life Eternal, *Thus to know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent*, John xvii. 3.

A third is, to *Obey God's Holy Will and Commandments, and to walk in the ſame all the Days of our Life*, that is, having abandon'd the Service of

of Satan, and yielded our ſelves up to the Faith of Chriſt, the Completion of our Righteouſneſs will be this, to live the remaining part of our Lives to the Honour of God, by paying him a faithful Obedience to all his moſt Juſt and Righteous Commands. And *Bleſſed are they who do his Commandments, for they only ſhall have right to the Tree of Life*, Rev. xxii. 14. Thus, in ſhort, you ſee the ſtate of that Righteouſneſs, upon the account of which we ſhall be juſtify'd and ſav'd.

And now it will be eaſie to underſtand, what it is to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*. And in the higheſt and moſt exalted ſence of the Phraſe, it is to Reduce whole Provinces under the Obedience of God. It is to reſcue that unhappy part of Mankind, which have for ſo many Ages paſt, labour'd under the Tyranny of Satan; it is to reduce them to the juſt and happy Government of their rightful Lord and Maſter Jeſus Chriſt. It is to Inſtruct thoſe Dark Corners of the Earth, in which the Light of the Goſpel has not yet ſhone, or but very dimly: It is to enlighten them with a full and bright Knowledge of their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And it is laſtly, to render them obſequious Servants to a juſt and holy God, *whoſe Service is perfect freedom*:

It

It is, I ſay, to diveſt them of that Inhumanity, Savageneſs, and Brutality, whereby they are Beaſts of Prey to each other, and to ſtamp upon their Souls that lovely Image of God, conſiſting in Knowledge, Faith, Love, and Purity, whereby they will become Angels, nay, God's, one to another. This is to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, in the higheſt Sence of the Phraſe: But in a Lower, yet a very Noble Sence, it is to be any ways Inſtrumental in the Inſtruction and Converſion of any Conſiderable number of Souls in any part of the World, as well within the Chriſtian Pale as elſewhere: Within the Chriſtian Pale, I ſay, where, God knows, there is ſtill that Ignorance, Profaneneſs, and Immorality, which loudly *call for more Labourers into the Vineyard*, to carry on to Perfection the Information and Converſion of Chriſtians. And in both theſe Senſes

Secondly, *Who they are who have heretofore, whoſe Duty yet it is, and who may ſtill be ſaid to Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, is the ſecond thing I propos'd to ſhew you. And here we are to conſider, that as the Apoſtacy of Mankind from God began ſoon after the Creation, ſo God had his Miniſters from the very beginning conteſting with

with the Powers of Darkneſs, and with all poſſible Application reſcuing Mankind out of the *Snares of the Devil*, as *Abel*, *Seth*, *Enos*, and *Noah* before the Flood; which laſt, for his eminent and painful, tho' unſucceſsful Services in this great Work, was call'd the *Preacher of Righteouſneſs*, 2 Pet. ii. 5.

Nor did either the Occaſion for the like Preachers of Righteouſneſs ceaſe, even after the dreadful Deſtruction by an univerſal Deluge; nor was God afterwards wanting to his own Honour, or the Good of Mankind, in ſending his Prophets and Prieſts to be Preachers of Righteouſneſs to a wicked World.

It was but very few Centuries after the Flood, that the whole Earth was again Revolted from God, and overſpread with Wickedneſs; and it was not without a conſtant Succeſſion of Prieſts and Prophets, as well as of Mercies and Deſtructions, that the Divine Providence did ſecure one only Nation, the *Jews*, in their Allegiance to him. And yet even theſe his *peculiar People*, *This Holy Nation*, in proceſs of Time, had ſo corrupted themſelves, that *their very Righteouſneſs was as filthy Rags*, Iſai. lxiv. 6. And both their Principles and Morals were ſo far debas'd, and the moſt demure and preciſe amongſt them, the Scribes

Scribes and Phariſees ſo defective in both, that our Saviour told his Diſciples, *Except their Righteouſneſs ſhould exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, they ſhould in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. v. 20.

And now when the Defection of Mankind from God was become ſo Univerſal, that it was time for him, either utterly to root out from the face of the Earth, all the Inhabitants of it, or he had no other way but by ſome Miracle of Mercy to Reform it; Then did the Divine Goodneſs, which always enclines him to the moſt Merciful part, chooſe to ſend an Ambaſſador Extraordinary to propoſe Terms of Reconciliation, and to invite Mankind home to God. And accordingly, *God, who at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, ſpake in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets, did in theſe laſt Days*, (or in the laſt great Age of the World) *ſpeak unto us by his Son, whom he appointed Heir of all things, by whom alſo he made the World*, Heb. i. 1, 2.

And here, how without Wonder and Aſtoniſhment, can we behold, with what prodigious Zeal, Application, and Induſtry the Bleſſed Jeſus ſet upon the great Work of Reforming Mankind. It was *his Meat and Drink*

to do the Will of him that ſent him, and accordingly *he continually went about doing Good*, both to the Bodies and Souls of Men. To their Bodies, by Healing them of all thoſe manifold and mighty Diſtempers that had then invaded them: To their Souls, by Curing them of thoſe moſt fatal Maladies of all, their Sins; to rid them of which, was ſo much the main and principal Deſign of his coming into the World, that from hence he was denominated a Saviour to it; *And they ſhall call his Name Jeſus, for he ſhall heal his People from their Sins.* But the Original cauſe of all their Miſeries, both Bodily and Spiritual, proceeding from the miſchievous Enmity of Satan, he did with the utmoſt diligence purſue that Rebel, driving him out of the Bodies and Souls of Men; both which he had ſo univerſally Uſurp'd, and did at that time ſo cruelly Tyrannize over.

And that he might at length be utterly diſpoſſeſs'd of all his Dominion, and that no Corner of the Earth might be left him to exerciſe his Tyranny upon, when the Bleſſed Jeſus was leaving the World himſelf, in purſuance of that *Power which was given unto him in Heaven, and on Earth*, he Commiſſion'd his Apoſtles to proſecute the glorious Conqueſt over the Devil,

and all his Works, which he had begun, *commanding them to go, and disciple all Nations, Baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them, promising to be with them always, even unto the end of the World*, Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. And so faithful were they in the Execution of their Trust, that they soon dispers'd themselves into the utmost parts of the Universe, so that not an Age had past, till *their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World*, Rom. x. 18. And thus you see who they are that have heretofore *Turn'd many to Righteousness.*

But who those are, *whose Duty yet it is, and who may still be said to do the same*, remains to be consider'd, and may God enable us to find them out.

And, *First*, This is a Work incumbent upon every Christian Church and Nation; but ought to be the Concern and Care of none more than ours, and can never be more seasonably set upon than at such a juncture as this. I say, to consider, and assist in the best Methods of *Turning many to Righteousness*, ought to be the Care and Concern of every Christian Church and Nation;

and

and this out of a grateful Return for that Bleſſed Light of the Goſpel which has ſhone amongſt them, by which Chriſtians are, or may be, (if they ſuffer themſelves to be regulated by the Rules of Chriſtianity, which ſo directly tend to render both private Perſons and publick Societies happy) by which Chriſtians may be, I ſay, ſo much diſtinguiſh'd from the deplorable State of thoſe Barbarous and Savage Nations, where Ignorance of the True God and Religion overſpreads their Country. Nothing more naturally diffuſes its ſelf than Light, and how prodigiouſly ungrateful would it be for a People themſelves enlighten'd, not to ſpread that to all Mankind which was given them to ſhew others, as well as themſelves, the Way to God, and their Happineſs!

But eſpecially this is a Care and Concern incumbent upon ſuch a Church and Nation as ours. A Church ſo pure in its Doctrine, and ſo Heavenly in its Worſhip, as in that reſpect is the fitteſt in the World to be the Model to the New Acquiſitions which ſhall be gain'd to the Church of Chriſt. But, alas, that it ſhould be ever ſaid, that another Church, whoſe Religion is ſo ſadly corrupted by *Paganiſh* Superſtitions, ſhould yet be ten thouſand times more

Zealous, in Baniſhing Infidelity and Paganiſm out of the World than ours is!

And it is a Work in Gratitude due from ſuch a Nation as this: A Nation ſo enrich'd by the Commerce and Commodities of ſo many Barbarous and Pagan Countries. Surely, *ſince we have in ſo plentiful a manner been made partakers of their Carnal Things, it is our Duty alſo to Miniſter to them in Spiritual things.*

And ſuch a Work ſurely can never be more *Seaſonably* promoted by any Church or Nation, than at ſuch a juncture as this. What has made up ſo great a part of our Devotions, for ſome Years paſt, as our Thankſgivings for the little leſs than Miraculous Deliverances we have receiv'd, in the Preſervation of our Religion and Liberties?

And when had this our Preſervation ſo glorious a Completion, as at this time? and ſo ſolemn an Acknowledgment paid to Heaven for it, as lately in this Place? But what fulſome Hypocriſie would it be to thank God with ſuch ſeeming Devotion, for the Preſervation of a Religion we do not in the leaſt Value? or, How can we be thought to Value it at all, if when it is in our Power to extend the Chriſtian Pale ſo far as we may, and to the bringing into it ſo many Thouſand Souls,

over

over whom we have an abſolute Dominion, ſhould we yet take no Care about it?

Secondly, Thoſe whoſe Duty it is in a more peculiar Manner than others, to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, are the Miniſters of Religion; I ſay, in a more *peculiar Manner* than others; for we are not only ordained and ſeparated for this Work, but the Inſtructing, Inlightning, and Informing of the World, which is the Foundation of all Righteouſneſs, is peculiarly the Paſtors Province. I do call the Inſtilling of Divine Knowledge into the Minds of Men, the *Foundation of all Religion*: For why? Knowledge of the true Nature of God, and of all the parts of that Religion which is to be paid him, is a neceſſary Guide and Director to all Virtuous and Religious Practice, it being the ſame thing to the Soul, as the Eye is to the Body. Nor is Divine Knowledge neceſſary to Mens living Vertuouſly, only as it is a Guide and Director to us ſo to live, but it is requiſite alſo, as it is the Principle and Reaſon whereon all virtuous and worthy Deeds are to be founded; inſomuch, that a thing which is otherwiſe well done, if it be not done *knowingly*, but ignorantly, will not be imputed by God, nor Man, as a vertuous and laudable Action. Nay, the chiefeſt of all Divine Graces, if it be not acted

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out of a through Knowledge of the Nature of God, and of true Religion, will e'en become, for want thereof, the Blackeſt of all Sins: as *Zeal*, when not guided by Knowledge, will eaſily be tranſported to Cruelty and Murther. What ſhall I ſay? The want of throughly underſtanding the true Nature of God, and the Nature and Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion, is the only Cauſe of all that Superſtition which is in the World; of Superſtition I ſay, than which there is not a more grievous Malady that can poſſibly infect the Souls of Men, ſo as to render them more troubleſome to themſelves, more miſchievous to the publick Good and Welfare of the Church, and to act more diſhonourably and provoking to God. In ſhort, it is Ignorance which is the Natural Parent of that Atheiſm and Infidelity ſo rife amongſt Men; and indeed, not only of that, but of all other Vices and Wickedneſſes whatſoever.

And now it is the great Duty of the Miniſters of Religion, to remove from the Minds of Men that Ignorance of Divine things, which is the cauſe of all their Miſcarriages, and to inſtill into them thoſe Doctrines and Religious Principles which are the Fountain of all their farther Righteouſneſs. This we are to attend upon, by

by *Catechizing*, and *Preaching*, and *Conference*, and whatever Methods can be thought moſt ſucceſsful and effectual in the Inſtruction of Mankind; and thoſe who ſhall beſt inſtruct their People, ſhall moſt effectually *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*: And therefore,

Thirdly, Thoſe Perſons will be reputed to have no ſmall ſhare in this Bleſſed Work, who have put the Miniſters of God in a Capacity of ſo Inſtructing his People, by making a Proviſion for the Acquiſition, Maintenance, and Propagation of Chriſtian Knowledge. Such are thoſe who have been the Founders of Churches, Schools, Colleges, and Libraries. And not here to ſpeak of the Excellency of ſuch Charities, which directly tending to the Everlaſting Happineſs of the Souls of Men, muſt be as far beyond what terminate only on this Mortal Life, as the Soul is more Excellent than the Body; and as an Eternal is to be preferred to a Temporal Felicity: But not to inſiſt on this: The Advantage of being thus Inſtrumental in Turning many to Righteouſneſs lies here, That it is not only in the preſent Generation, that ſuch are thus ſerviceable to the Souls of Men, but in all Ages to come, and when they ſhall be long dead, they will yet ſpeak, and ſo ſpeak as to have

a Share in all the Converſions, which ſhall be made by Vertue, and through the Aſſiſtance of that Stock which they have laid up for the Promoting of Religion and Learning.

And eſpecially, the Erecting of Libraries of neceſſary and uſeful Books in Divinity, is of all others a neceſſary Proviſion for the Propagation of Chriſtian Knowledge. For why? *The Prieſts Lips ſhould preſerve Knowledge*, becauſe *the People are to ſeek the Law at his Mouth*, Mal. ii. 7. And the Meaſures of Knowledge a Miniſter is to be Maſter of, muſt be neceſſarily ſuch as ſhall enable him to give his People an entire View of the whole Scheme of Chriſtian Doctrine in that Connexion, wherein one part of it depends upon another, and for want of which, the Generality of Chriſtians are ſo ignorant of the true Nature and Deſign of Chriſtianity. Farther, a Paſtor muſt throughly underſtand the Nature, Terms, and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, and the Nature of Chriſt's Mediation, through which it was obtain'd. More particulary yet, he muſt be able clearly to explain, and fully to prove each Article of his Chriſtian Faith; many of which not being obvious to our Natural Reaſon, but capable of Proof only from the Scriptures, he muſt be well vers'd in the Language, and

and Manner of Speaking of the Holy Pen-Men, before they can be ſo explain'd and prov'd. And he muſt be able to ſtate exactly the Nature and Extent of Chriſtian Duties, which Knowledge depending upon a right Underſtanding of the Nature, and different Obligations of all thoſe many ſorts of Laws, Natural, Divine, and Humane, which regulate and direct our Duties. This is a part of Knowledge as extenſive as it is neceſſary.

All which Premiſes being duly conſider'd, and withall, that we cannot now work Miracles, and that *Inſpiration* is no part of our Talent; but that we are left to the Ordinary means of Converting the World; *namely*, the Common Meaſures of God's Holy Spirit accompanying our hard Study: It muſt therefore clearly follow, that thoſe Perſons will be reputed to have no ſmall ſhare in this Bleſſed Work, who ſhall lay ſuch a Foundation of Chriſtian Knowledge, as without which, Humanely ſpeaking, it is not poſſible the Paſtors of Chriſt's Church ſhould feed their Flock with neceſſary Inſtruction.

Thirdly, And now I am to ſhew you, *That it will be found one day the higheſt pitch of Wiſdom to have been Inſtrumental in this Bleſſed Work of*

Turning many to Righteouſneſs. It is the part of Wiſdom to propoſe to it ſelf a Good End, and then to purſue it by due and proper Means. And proportionably, as the End is more or leſs excellent, and the Means more or leſs adapted to carry it on; in the ſame degree is a Man's Wiſdom to be judg'd greater or leſs with relation to it. Now here the End is incomparably excellent, beyond any other that can be nam'd. For why? to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs* is, in effect, to conſult, and that in the higheſt Manner, the Honour and Glory of God, and the greateſt Good and Happineſs of Mankind, than which nothing can be thought of more Excellent. *To Turn many to Righteouſneſs*, you have alſo ſeen, is to diſpoſſeſs Satan of an unrighteous Uſurpation he has made upon God's Dominion over his own Creatures, and it is to reduce them under the Government of their Rightful Lord and Maſter. And can any thing be more glorious than ſuch an Atchievement? And it is ſo to rectifie the corrupt and ſinful Nature of Men, and to bring them under the Direction of ſuch Laws, as alone can make them happy: And what is it to be a Benefactor, if this be not?

Nor can any Means be more worthy and great, and better fitted to the Purpoſes propoſ'd, than

than those we have consider'd. For let the whole Nation, let the Clergy, and such as have Wealth and Substance, set heartily about it, and the Work is done.

This, in short, is to be *wise to Salvation*, and alas! what is the Wisdom of this World in comparison with this? What an Ideot is *David's* Fool, who when he might *make to himself Friends in Heaven of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, heaps up to himself Riches, not knowing who shall gather them?* And who is wholly solicitous to find out some one, *from whom he might call his Lands after his own Name*, (fondly thinking, that by this means *his Houses shall continue for ever, and his Dwelling-Places to all Generations*). When by such Charities to the Souls of Men, as have been mentioned, he might provide that his Name be *written in the Book of Life*. Which brings me to the last thing propos'd; and shews, that to *Turn many to Righteousness* is the highest Wisdom, because that,

Fourthly, *Such will be the most Gloriously rewarded.* Besides, the Proposing of a Good End, and the Prosecuting of it by due and proper Means, there is something yet farther wanting to compleat the Wisdom of our Actions, and

that is, to do all in the Prospect of an excellent Reward. And here, as the End, *viz.* the Glory of God, and the Good of Mankind, is the most transcendently Glorious, and the Means propos'd in order to accomplish it, are what do most become Christians in their several Stations, and according to their several Abilities; so the Reward that will Crown all this, is here in my Text spoke to be such, as is not in the power of Words to express a greater. *They that are wise shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever and ever.*

And indeed, as of all other Sinners, those will be the most exquisitely punish'd, who shall any ways corrupt and deprave the Principles and Manners of Mankind: So of all the Righteous Servants of God, those will be exalted to the highest degrees of Glory, who shall be most industrious in the Instruction and Conversion of Men.

I say of all other Sinners, those will be the most exquisitely punish'd, who shall any ways corrupt and deprave the Principles and Manners of Mankind. Such as do sow ill Principles, and do any ways discourage and discountenance Piety and Vertue, are said to *put a Stumbling-block, and to be an Occasion to fall in their Brother's way*, Rom. xiv. 13. And *wo to that Man* (saith our Saviour) *by whom*

the Offence cometh: For whoſo ſhall offend one of the meaneſt of thoſe that believe in him, it were better for him that a Milſtone were hanged about his Neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the Sea, Matt. xviii. 6, 7. And a moſt emphatical Threatning this is to all thoſe wicked Inſtruments of *Unrighteouſneſs* abroad in the World, who make it their Buſineſs, and ſeem to be intent upon this very thing. It is ſad enough to have one ſelf done or acted wickedly: But whoſoever ſhall not only *break*, tho' it be *one of the leaſt Commandments; but ſhall teach Men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. v. 19. that is, none at all: He ſhall be caſt out of it, and puniſh'd as one of thoſe who are the greateſt Enemies to it. There is in the Words a vaſt deal more to be underſtood than is expreſs'd, as is uſual, both in the Sacred Writings, and in profane Authors; ſo that the Caſe of thoſe Men is moſt dreadfully and deſperately bad, who by profane, atheiſtical, and lewd Diſcourſe, or whatever other *evil Communications do corrupt good* Principles and *Manners*. But above all others, it is a dreadful thing to conſider what will be the Doom of th[illegible] Men, who by wicked Books, ſuch as both *Arveiſts*, *Deiſts*, *Socinians*, and *Antinomians* do now, to the Re-

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proach of our Church and Nation, daily publiſh amongſt us. It is dreadful, I ſay, to conſider what will befall ſuch in the End. What Evil of this Nature is done only by Diſcourſe, is but tranſciently bad, and may ruine the Souls only of ſome few of their unfortunate Companions. But the wicked Principles which are propagated by Books are laſting Miſchiefs, from whence, as from a *Pandora*'s Box, fly out thoſe Plagues and Mortal Diſeaſes that can never be recall'd, and will ſpread Deſtruction and Ruine amongſt the Souls of Men to the World's End.

And indeed it is hard to ſay, what Meaſures of Repentance may be ſufficient for theſe Men. The Repentance they muſt come to, or be everlaſtingly and immeaſurably Undone, muſt be ſuch as comes not under the ordinary Definitions given that great Condition of our Salvation. It is not a private Grief and Sorrow, nor barely an Amendment for the future, will be ſufficient to reconcile ſuch to God. But as the Diſhonours done to the Great Creator, by their means, are never likely to end, but with the World; ſo the Reparations to be made for theſe kind of Affronts and Injuries to Chriſt's Kingdom muſt be by a Recantation as publick and laſting as the Nature

ture of the Offence is. And the exacting of ſuch a Repentance as this, I muſt needs recommend to you, *my Brethren*, who are entring to day into the *Miniſtry*, when-ever you are called to the Sick Bed of any notorious Atheiſt or Deiſt whatſoever. And this was the Reſolution of a very eminent Biſhop of our Church, in the Caſe of one of a conſiderable figure amongſt them, after he had written his Book *de Veritate*. You are the Stewards of the Myſteries of God, ſo that you cannot, with Fidelity to your Great Maſter, diſpence the Sacrament of Reconciliation to thoſe, who have erected laſting Batteries againſt his Kingdom, till they themſelves, by a like publick Recantation, ſhall have pull'd them down with their own hands. So that you ſee the very Repentance of thoſe, who ſhall *Turn many to Unrighteouſneſs*, is a hard and fearful Diſcipline. And what then? How much beyond the common Meaſures will the Puniſhment of thoſe amongſt them be, who ſhall remain Impenitent? And indeed it is but reaſonable to believe, that the Caſe will be vaſtly different betwixt thoſe who have only in their own Perſons tranſgreſt the Laws of God, and ſuch who make a Party, and fight the Devil's Battels againſt Him. Theſe Men muſt be ſuppoſed to be firſt

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at perfect Enmity with Him, and their whole Nature muſt be envenom'd againſt Him; and therefore it cannot be expected but that the *Fury of his Wrath*, and the very *Dregs of his Anger* will be poured out againſt ſuch.

And now, if of all other Sinners thoſe will be the moſt exquiſitely puniſh'd, who ſhall any ways corrupt and deprave the Principles and Manners of Mankind; then, by parity of Reaſon, *of all the Righteous Servants of God, thoſe will be exalted to the higheſt degrees of Glory, who ſhall be moſt induſtrious in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Men; or ſhall lay the Foundation of Chriſtian Knowledge, or Contribute toward the Promoting of it.* For this we need no other Teſtimony than that remarkable place of St. *James* v. 20. *Know, that he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Ways, ſhall ſave a Soul from Death, and ſhall cover a Multitude of Sins.* Theſe Words ſpeak ſuch a Regard to the Charitable Endeavours of thoſe who do any ways promote, or do Labour in the Inſtruction and Converſion of Sinners, that through the Merits and Satisfaction of Chriſt, (by which only it is that God becomes propitious to our beſt Performances) this kind of Charity will be had in no mean Conſideration when God ſhall take Cognizance of our Sins

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and Failures. And if the Converting of one Sinner ſhall be ſo conſider'd, what Glories will await thoſe who *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*? I cannot poſſibly expreſs them in any higher Words than thoſe of my Text, in which alone there is a force and luſtre, like to the Rewards themſelves which they beſpeak.

And proportionably as the Aſſiſtances given to *Turn many to Righteouſneſs* ſhall be moſt extenſive and laſting; in the ſame meaſure we muſt ſuppoſe the degrees of Glory will be alotted to ſuch Piety. And therefore, ſince, next to what the Apoſtles did by their perſonal Labours, and inſpir'd Writings, to Convert Mankind to God, ſcarcely any thing can be thought of a more direct and immediate Tendency to the ſame Glorious and Bleſſed End, than to lay up thoſe Magazines of Chriſtian Knowledge on the Confines of Satan's Kingdom, out of which the Miniſters of God's Word may be conſtantly ſupply'd, both with the Food of Souls, and with that Spiritual Armour where-with they may carry on the War with Succeſs, ſo as at length to drive that Arch-Rebel out of thoſe vaſt Territories he now poſſeſſes: It will therefore follow, that thoſe pious Perſons will moſt effectually conſult their future Happineſs,

and provide beſt for an Exalted Glory, who ſhall expend moſt in fixing Libraries of neceſſary and uſeful Books in Divinity, in order to the Inſtruction both of Miniſter and People. Such indeed cannot be ſaid, by ſo doing, to hazard their Perſons in the Converting of Mankind, and ſo may not be entitled thereby to the Reward of *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors*. But however, they may be much more inſtrumental in *Turning many to Righteouſneſs*, even than thoſe who actually labour in the Work it ſelf; becauſe that, in effect, it will be they who ſhall *Preach*, *Catechize*, and *Inſtruct* thoſe Parts of the Wörld, as well in future, as in the preſent Age. It is they will be the Fountain, we ſhall be only the Conduit-Pipes through which the Waters of Life will be convey'd to the People: And therefore, except we ſhall beſtir our ſelves very much, they will far out-ſtrip us in the Perſuit of Eternal Glory.

In ſhort, Thoſe who ſhall make ſuch a laſting Proviſion for the Inſtruction and Converſion of any conſiderable part of Mankind, may, in ſo doing, be very well look'd upon as a ſort of *Apoſtles* to thoſe Parts of the World. And if ſo, we may conclude a great

great deal concerning the Degrees of Glory wherewith ſuch ſhall be recompenc'd, from that Promiſe of our Saviour to his Apoſtles, *Matt.* xix. 28. *Verily, I ſay unto you, When the Son of Man ſhall ſit on the Throne of his Glory, ye alſo ſhall ſit upon Twelve Thrones, judging the Twelve Tribes of Iſrael:* For tho' we are not to conclude from theſe Words, that any beſides the Twelve ſhall be exalted to the higheſt Degrees of Happineſs, yet from hence we may clearly gather, that proportionably as Perſons ſhall approach neareſt to the Apoſtles in Evangelizing Mankind, they ſhall be placed nearer and nearer to them upon the ſeveral Aſcents, to the higheſt Stations in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Not that I would leſſen the Hopes of Glory to you, *my Brethren*, who ſhall labour in this Great and Glorious Work, of *Gaining Souls to God.* No, but rather give me leave, with the great Apoſtle to the Gentiles, *Rom.* xi. 13. *to magnifie to you your Office*, who are entring to day upon the Sacred Miniſtry, and ſome of you in order to a Bleſſed Miſſion. And you have this Advantage of all other Profeſſions of Men, that whereas others, by a due diſcharge of the Duties of their proper Calling, can only

become Righteous themſelves, you, in the due Exerciſe of your Miniſtry, will *Turn many to Righteouſneſs*: So that whilſt other Chriſtians can expect only the common Rewards for well-doing, you may promiſe your ſelves, upon the Performance even of the ordinary Duties of your Function, to be extraordinarily recompenc'd. And the Reaſon is this, becauſe the Good that you will do is doubly and trebly beneficial; for you will not only conſult thereby your own Happineſs, but will render your ſelves Benefactors to Mankind, and what is above all, will enlarge the Bounds of Chriſt's Kingdom.

I ſay you will render your ſelves Benefactors to Mankind. For why? the Religion you are to propagate and promote, is of ſuch a Nature and Tendency, that were it heartily embrac'd, the moſt Wild and Savage of Men would become Innocent, Kind, and Sociable to one another; they would not hurt nor deſtroy in all the Holy Mountain. And it is Prophecy'd, that this will be the Fruits of Chriſtianity, when *the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord*, Iſai. xi. 9. And you will alſo, by a diligent Application to the Duties of your proper Calling, pull down the

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Kingdom of Satan, and enlarge the Bounds of Christ's Kingdom, or at leaſt-wiſe encreaſe the Number of his faithful Subjects.

This will indeed engage you in great Conflicts with the Powers of Darkneſs; and the Difficulties and Oppoſitions they and their Agents, the wicked Men of the World, ſhall give you, will call forth all your Courage and Prudence to reſiſt. But the greater are the Dangers and Difficulties, the more noble is the Vertue; and the greater the Vertue, the more glorious will be the Reward.

And therefore I cannot forbear to bleſs that Providence which calls both you and me into the Service of thoſe darker parts of the Church, where we ſhall have occaſion to do more Good than here we could be able, to conteſt with greater Difficulties, and thereby to entitle our ſelves to the chiefeſt Rewards. For as bad as it is to be Ambitious after Earthly Honours, it is nobly Vertuous, and Chriſtian-like, an Emulation to excell in the Favour of God, and in thoſe Stations of Glory which he will beſtow upon ſuch as ſhall exert themſelves in his Service. And to be Inſtrumental *in bringing Light to them that ſit in Darkneſs, and in the Shadow of Death*, whether we conſider the Service, or the

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Recompence, has enough in it to ſatisfie the moſt pious Ambition.

To conclude therefore in the Words of St. *Paul*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. *Fight the good Fight of Faith*, that is, maintain and propagate the Goſpel againſt all Oppoſition, and live according to it; *lay hold on Eternal Life*, nay, ſtrive to excell in thoſe Achievements that ſhall entitle you to the chiefeſt Glories of it; for this is that *whereunto you are called*, and are now to *profeſs this good Profeſſion* at an Holy Ordination *before many Witneſſes*.

FINIS.